

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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SUBJECT: CIVAIR - CONSULTATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA

REF: CANBERRA 00515

1. ACTING MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT ISSUED PRESS RELEASE
JANUARY 23 ANNOUNCING DECISION TO SEEK CONSULTATIONS AS
CONSEQUENCE OF CONTINENTAL ROUTE FILING. RELEASE STATES
THAT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WISHES TO REVIEW MOST OF THE
MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT.

2. DECISION IS STILL PENDING AS TO DATE FOR TALKS.

3. TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE IS AS FOLLOWS:

"THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD REQUESTED CONSULTATIONS
WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE
PROVISIONS OF THE AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES, THE ACTING MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, MR. IAN
MACPHEE, ANNOUNCED IN CANBERRA TODAY.

"IN THE COURSE OF THE TALKS THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
WANTS REVIEWED MOST OF THE MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE
AGREEMENT, MR. MACPHEE SAID.

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"THIS WAS FIRST NEGOTIATED IN 1946 AND HAS HAD NO MAJOR
AMENDMENT SINCE 1957.

"THE DECISION TO SEEK CONSULTATIONS BEFORE THE
GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE RESULTS OF THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL AVIATION POLICY REVIEW HAS BEEN PROMPTED BY CONTINENTAL
AIRLINES FILING TO OPERATE FOUR SCHEDULED DC10 SERVICES PER
WEEK BETWEEN SYDNEY AND LOS ANGELES FROM MARCH 1.

"THIS WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING THE LEVEL OF TOTAL SEATING CAPACITY ON TRANS PACIFIC SERVICES BY 25 PERCENT COMPARED WITH THAT OFFERED IN MARCH 1977.

"INCREASES IN THE CAPACITY OFFERED BY CURRENT OPERATORS ALLOWING FOR APPROXIMATELY SIX PERCENT GROWTH HAD BEEN APPROVED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS ONLY AS RECENTLY AS LATE LAST YEAR.

"MR. MACPHEE ADDED THAT THE NUMBER OF SERVICES PROPOSED WOULD RESULT IN THE UNITED STATES' CARRIERS OFFERING 13 SERVICES PER WEEK, A FREQUENCY ADVANTAGE OF ALMOST TWO TO ONE WHEN COMPARED TO THE SEVEN FLIGHTS PER WEEK APPROVED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL AIRLINE, QANTAS.

"THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CONSIDER THAT THE CAPACITY OR FREQUENCY PROPOSED BEARS A REASONABLE RELATIONSHIP TO THE DEMANDS OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC, AS THE AGREEMENT REQUIRES.

"TALKS ARE EXPECTED TO COMMENCE SOME TIME IN FEBRUARY."
ALSTON

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